

# Westfield Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124117
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Jill Nugent
<b>Setting Address</b>	Westfield Road, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, EN11 8RA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01992 410310
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Westfield Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Westfield Pre school opened in 1984 and operates from a classroom in Westfield School in Hoddesdon. Children share access to a secure outdoor play area. The pre school is open every weekday morning from 09:00 until 12:00 during term times, and, at certain times of the year only, on Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 13:00 until 15:30.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the group at any one time. There are currently 33 children on roll and, of these, 23 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven staff to work directly with the children. Six of the staff, including the manager and deputy, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre school is a member of the Pre school Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well as the pre school has good procedures in place. All accident and medication forms are maintained correctly. Staff request information on any prior administration of medication. This helps to safeguard children from a possible overdose. Children are protected from infection because staff provide parents with detailed information about the exclusion periods for contagious illnesses. In the event of an accident, children are well taken care of as staff are qualified in first aid and have good access to first aid equipment. They ensure that children are protected from hot sunshine in the summer months and keep warm in winter. Therefore, children keep healthy.

Staff are attentive to matters of hygiene. They have various cleaning rotas in place and children are always cared for in a clean environment. A written procedure is available if children need to have nappies or pull ups changed in order to avoid the risk of cross-infection. Staff have a good understanding of food hygiene and ensure that food is refrigerated at the correct temperature. Children are becoming aware of personal hygiene. They know why they need to wash their hands before snack time and are always reminded to wash their hands after going to the toilet. They are able to access tissues independently. These procedures promote children's health effectively.

Children enjoy various opportunities for physical activity each day. They have fun taking part in action rhymes and ring games. In the outdoor play area they like to join in ball games and dig in the sand. They learn to control wheeled vehicles as they ride them along the pathway. They enjoy running around in the fresh air on the school playground, kicking their way through the autumn leaves. These activities all help children to keep fit and healthy.

Children have their dietary needs met very well. They enjoy a variety of healthy snacks, such as fruit, cheese, cucumber and breadsticks. These are always presented attractively in individual bowls and children enjoy eating together around a table. Drinking water is available at all times and easily accessible. Children with special diets eat appropriately because all adults are aware of their particular dietary needs. Children have a good awareness of healthy eating as they often talk about which foods are good for them to eat. They regularly take part in cooking activities when they learn how to prepare and cook foods. Overall, they have good opportunities to learn about a healthy lifestyle.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. The room is bright and colourful, with many posters, pictures and photographs. Children keep secure on the premises as all the classroom doors are kept locked and the outdoor play area has lockable gates. Children are supervised closely as they come and go to ensure their safety. Staff promote children's safety effectively through having good safety measures in place. All cleaning materials are kept out of reach of children and the low level electrical sockets are covered. Staff do not leave electrical equipment, such as, cookers and kettles, unattended at any time. There are good fire precautions in place and a fire blanket is easily accessible to adults. An evacuation plan is on display at strategic points around the room. Children regularly practise the fire drill so that they know what to do in an emergency. Staff carry out risk assessments in all areas of the

school used by children, and also daily safety checks. Adults are made aware of safety issues through various notices around the room. In this way staff ensure that children are always safe in their care.

Children use a range of suitable, and safe, resources and equipment. Many of these are easily accessible to children as they are stored in low level, labelled, drawers. Staff continually update the resources and keep a check on them for safety. Children are reminded to use toys and equipment safely, for example, taking care when riding bikes outdoors. They learn about keeping themselves safe through a number of topic based activities, such as, road safety and stranger danger. Therefore, children keep safe during play and are developing a good awareness of personal safety. On outings, children's safety is promoted through staff carrying out a risk assessment of activities prior to going out. They ensure that every eventuality is covered in the planning and preparation of any trip.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Children are only allowed to leave the pre school with a known adult, as a password and signature are required. There is an efficient recording system in place so that any concerns can be logged immediately. The leader has all the necessary information to enable her to seek advice, including details of the new safeguarding boards. Consequently, children are well protected in this area.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are well settled and happy at the pre school. They enjoy choosing from the various activities on offer. They show much interest in exploring different materials, such as, pasta, sand and water. They get on well with each other and often play together in groups, for instance, pushing trains around a track or filling trucks in the sand. They are gaining confidence and independence through being able to select resources themselves. Children have the opportunity to play independently if they wish. Their confidence is boosted when they are praised by staff for their achievements, for example, recognising the letters in their names. Staff often praise children at group times for selecting the correct name card or counting people correctly. In this way, children are encouraged to make an attempt and persevere with a task. They become very involved in activities of their own choosing, for instance, using construction equipment to make models. Overall, children enjoy a variety of stimulating play opportunities.

Children are involved in a range of activities which support their development and learning. Staff make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan activities that are appropriate for children's age and ability. Children are developing communication skills through staff engaging them in conversation. They explore mark making in different situations and have good opportunities to develop creative skills. For example, they enjoy experimenting with a selection of vegetables in paint, discovering shapes and patterns. Children take part in imaginative play in a role play area that changes along with the theme, for instance, a cosy corner or a bus. Staff assess children's development through observations to ensure that they offer appropriate learning experiences.

### **NURSERY EDUCATION**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals overall. They are curious, and confident, and concentrate well. They enjoy sharing books with staff at a special book time each day, and listening to stories at group times. They learn to recognise the sounds and shapes of letters of the alphabet. Children use

their increasing knowledge to write their own names and attempt other words too. They have a growing awareness of mathematical language, and concepts, such as, heavy and light. They are learning to count correctly and to recognise numerals. They use their skills in number rhymes to work out how many items are left at any one time. Children increase their mathematical skills in various organised activities, such as, board games and graph making. They enjoy using the computer to play games which enhance their learning in other areas. Overall, they are gaining appropriate and relevant skills in both literacy and numeracy.

Children are finding out about their environment in planned themes such as, transport. They enjoy playing with cars and trucks in sand and soil. They go for nature walks, collecting leaves in the autumn to make collages. They are developing good construction skills and use different materials to make models, finding out how different shapes fit together. There are good opportunities for children to take part in a wide variety of creative activities. They use their own ideas in free drawing and painting. In organised activities children make prints with tyres, shapes and vegetables. They like to explore musical instruments and learn new songs at group times. Children are developing good manipulative skills through using tools and threading ribbon, or string, in cards and wheels. In physical activities they are able to increase their skills using small and large equipment, such as, balls, beanbags and the activity trail. Overall, they have a variety of worthwhile learning experiences.

Staff plan the educational programme around various topics and show good coverage of the six areas of learning. Weekly plans are particularly clear and easy to use. They include a learning intention for each activity, which is linked to the stepping stones, and ideas for extending the activity for more able children. Therefore, staff are fully aware of what is expected when leading an activity. Separate plans are devised for the four-year-old children's activity each day and these are useful in providing a basis for extending their learning. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and offer practical, hands on activities to promote children's learning. They enhance children's imaginative play by joining in and suggesting ideas, for example, making a shopping list. They talk with children during activities to encourage them to think and experiment further, for instance, when trying to balance small bears. The four-year-olds are extended in their learning when taking part in a focused activity. However, staff do not always use opportunities effectively to really challenge the more able children in activities and free choice play. They make good use of various observations on children to update their assessment records and track their progress towards the early learning goals. A detailed evaluation of their planning also helps in guiding future planning so that children are well supported in their learning.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a real sense of belonging. They are welcomed each day by staff and gather together as a whole group at various points during the session. They have close relationships with staff and feel valued and included. They feel particularly special when chosen to be a helper. Staff encourage all children to participate in the planned activities. They offer good support to children and help them to develop personal independence. Children are learning to respect the needs of others. They work together at tidy up time and clear away after snack. They know how to sign the days of the week, and the weather symbols, and understand how this is helpful for people who can not hear. Children have very good opportunities to learn about a wider society. They take part in activities which are organised around cultural and religious festivals. For example, they have snacks in a 'Succot' shelter and try out a 'didgeridoo'. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support and guidance from staff. Any concerns about children are taken up as soon as possible and observations made using a Sure Start assessment system. Staff liaise closely with parents and have good links with other professionals. They work to individual education plans and keep particularly attractive, and useful, daily records of children's progress. Children who speak English as an additional language are particularly well supported as staff learn words in children's other languages and display labels in English and other languages too. Children's behaviour is very good and they play harmoniously. If there are any disputes, staff talk calmly with children to sort them out. They ensure that children are aware of their boundaries. Children are reminded of the rules whenever necessary and encouraged to care and share. Staff promote positive behaviour at all times. Consequently, children learn to behave responsibly.

The pre school works very closely with parents and carers. Parents are very involved in the setting, either helping out in practical ways or during a session. There is good information on the pre school's procedures in the prospectus and the policies are available to parents on request. Newsletters keep them up to date with events and committee news. Parents supply information about their children to help staff meet individual needs. They are given help if necessary to settle children in to the pre school and there is a sound complaints procedure in place. Staff are putting together an interesting display around the 'Birth to three matters' framework so that parents are able to understand what this involves. Parents especially enjoy the termly coffee mornings when they can view the art displays and children's work. They are highly satisfied with the provision and the care their children receive. Children benefit greatly from the good lines of communication between staff and parents.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded nursery children is good. The prospectus includes very good and detailed information about the Foundation Stage of learning. Parents have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress at coffee mornings. They are provided with information about the daily activities and the 'colour, letter and number' of the week. They are asked to help out by supporting their children in various activities at home. In this way they can be more involved in their children's learning. Children benefit from this close working partnership.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The pre school's policies and procedures work very well in practice to promote the outcomes for children. The leader has collated a set of detailed policies and procedures to provide a very good operational plan for staff. All the necessary policies are in place. The documentation is very well organised and kept up to date. Parents complete a registration form and provide various consents with regard to their children's care. All the information on children is kept securely on site and is easily accessible. The attendance registers are always completed appropriately at the beginning of the session. The display boards around the classroom are particularly well maintained and attractive, providing information about staff, health and safety, alongside children's pictures. The written planning for the educational programme is readily available and on display. Overall, the organisation of paperwork provides an excellent framework for children's care and education.

Staff are committed to continually improving the provision through attending training courses and local provider meetings. There are thorough employment and induction procedures in place and staff have regular appraisals. Several volunteers help out at the pre school and all have suitability checks. Staff have attended a variety of training courses since the last inspection.

These include courses in children's learning difficulties, behaviour management, food hygiene and child protection. Children benefit from staff's acquired knowledge and skills.

Staff have a high regard for children's well-being. They have a caring attitude and ensure children are safe and happy at pre school. Good adult to child ratios are maintained at all times. Staff work to a daily routine which offers children a range of organised activities, group times and opportunities for free choice play. Staff are always on hand to support and play with the children. At times, however, they do not take the opportunity to actively seek out children at play in order to get involved and enhance their enjoyment. At transition times, staff use interesting musical sounds and chants as signals and this helps the session to run smoothly. The room is divided into learning areas and the recent addition of an outdoor area has provided children with extra space for play. Members of staff each have responsibility for a group of children and this enables them to build close relationships with children. Overall, children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The leader leads by example and, consequently, encourages her staff to work effectively as a team. All staff have an input to the planning of the program and this enables them to differentiate the activities to suit children's differing abilities. The leader monitors the provision through discussion in staff meetings, and observation, and makes effective use of a written action plan in order to continually improve the provision. She has very good links with the primary school and has worked hard to provide an attractive outdoor play area for children. She adds new resources whenever possible, both for children and staff. Her successful leadership contributes effectively to children receiving a good nursery education.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous care inspection the pre school was asked to review the organisation of snack time. Children now have a good opportunity to develop their social skills at snack time as members of staff sit and talk with them while they eat.

At the previous nursery education inspection it was suggested that art materials could be made more accessible so that children can choose independently. A good selection of art and craft materials are now easily accessible in labelled drawers. Children are able to use these independently to develop their own ideas.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

## WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that staff are involved with children in play activities whenever possible.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that staff maximise opportunities to challenge the more able children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)